حكومة دبي
GOVERNMENT OF DUBAI

DUBAI
Culture للثقافة

2021
Annual Report

Illuminations... a year gone by
and a look to the future

For years, Dubai has been witnessing continuous development in the cultural and creative sector thanks to the support and guidance of our wise leadership – headed by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai – and to the efforts made by Dubai Culture and Arts Authority to enhance the emirate's position on the regional and global cultural scene as a preferred destination for cultural experiences, a beacon of cultural diversity, an incubator for international talent, and a hub for creativity and cultural dialogue.

Dubai has become a beacon for culture and creativity enthusiasts due to a multitude of factors that have contributed to enabling a sustainable and integrated ecosystem for the cultural and creative industries, most notably the provision of an infrastructure to support social networks, for example; incentives; and an advanced digital environment that helps enable innovation; as well as the development of methods and tools to enhance accessibility to the entire value chain of a number of sectors in the cultural and creative industries to develop their efficiency. Other factors include the supportive institutional and regulatory environment of policies and legislation as well as the provision of opportunities for partnerships and promising markets for the sector, in addition to the boosters that drive its performance and health, such as the physical environment, the maturation of urban infrastructure, the spatial environment, city attractiveness, the high quality of life, and exclusivity.

In conjunction with this annual report that sheds light on the cultural sector, the most prominent achievements, successes and related changes that the emirate witnessed during 2021 – in line with the Principles of the 50th charter, which focuses on building the best and most active economy in the world – we affirm our keenness to continuously strengthen and achieve our strategic objectives, making 2022 a milestone towards advancing the emirate›s creative scene and achieving a positive economic and social impact to achieve the objectives of the Dubai Creative Economy Strategy, which aims to make Dubai the global capital of the creative economy by 2026.

Foreword by Her Highness Sheikha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum
Chairperson of Dubai Culture and Arts Authority and Member of the Dubai Council

We are pleased to present our 2021 annual report that highlights the outputs of Dubai's cultural and creative sector and the emirate's most prominent achievements. Through this report, we are exploring new horizons in Dubai's culture and creativity, based on our commitment at Dubai Culture to support a stimulating infrastructure for cultural and creative industries and to empower a sustainable and prosperous ecosystem that supports the emirate's economic growth and enhances its position as a global centre for culture, an incubator for creativity, and a thriving hub for talent.

Dubai Culture underscores the importance of the cultural and creative industries, which have become one of the fastest growing industries in the world, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as well as many other global reports that shed light on the contribution of these industries to national economies; supporting this promising sector is one of the main sectoral priorities of the Authority's strategic roadmap, given the increasing importance of the cultural and creative industries. We developed key programmes and initiatives that form the essential pillars for the growth of the cultural and creative industries in the emirate and contribute to making culture accessible to everyone through extensive cultural events, and experiences such as museums and heritage sites that celebrate the authentic national identity and the rich Emirati heritage as well as instil feelings of pride in community members within an integrated system that contributes to achieving the emirate's comprehensive economic development.

2021 presented many challenges that we faced together. Today, in this comprehensive report, we review the fruits of our cumulative efforts across various knowledge-based economic activities that form the backbone of cultural and creative industries and play an important role in the economic system. We look forward to a new year and a journey full of giving and excellence during which we will celebrate Dubai's rich cultural heritage and work to strengthen its position as the largest regional hub for culture.

Foreword by Her Excellency Hala Badri
Director General of Dubai Culture and Arts Authority

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About Dubai Culture and Arts Authority

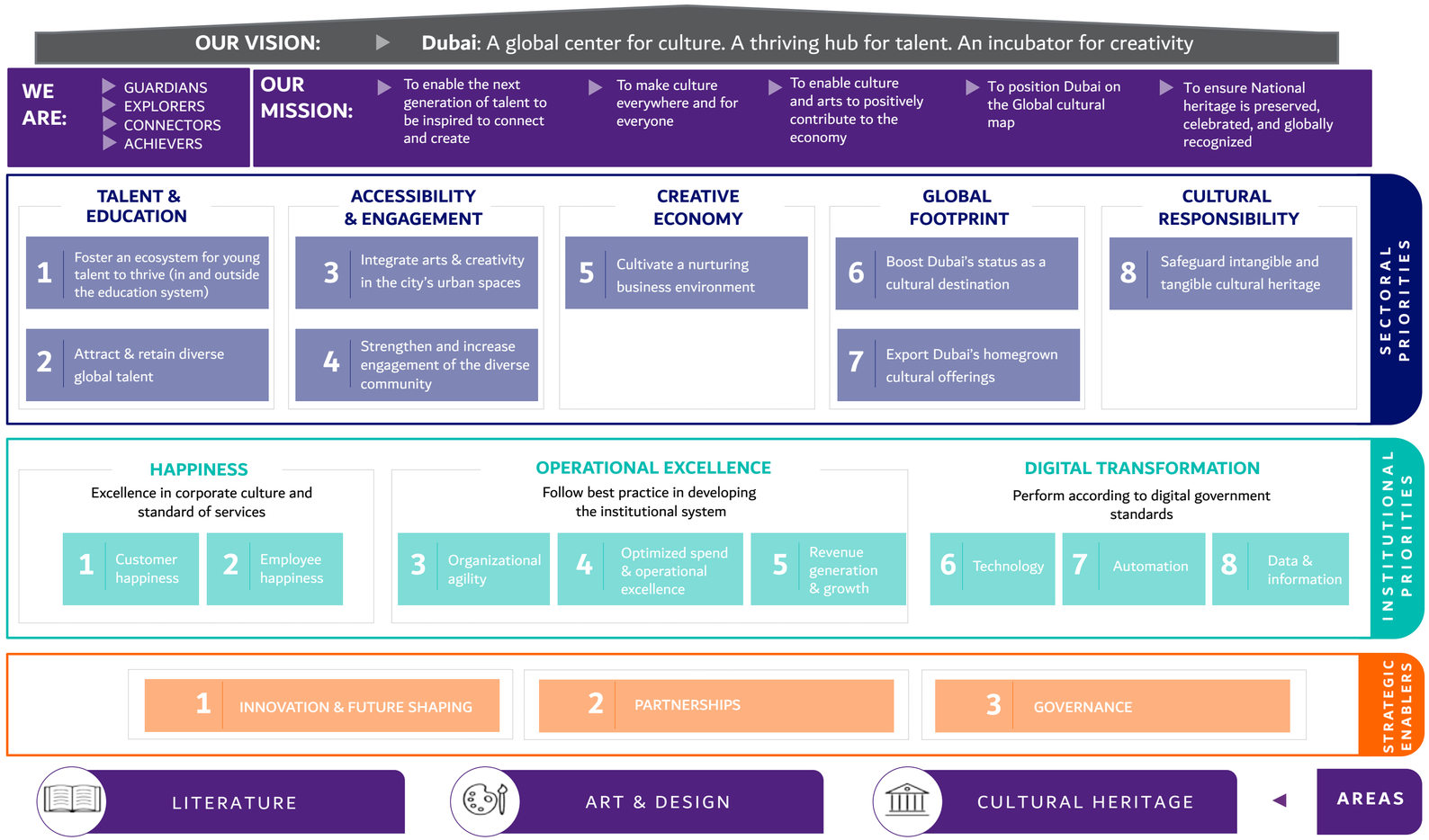
On 8 March 2008, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, launched Dubai Culture & Arts Authority to be the custodian of Dubai's cultural and creative sector and help define it at the local and global levels, enabling and developing these sectors to consolidate the emirate's position as an active global centre for creativity.

Under the leadership of Her Highness Sheikha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Chairperson of Dubai Culture, the Authority is committed to enriching Dubai's cultural scene based on the UAE's heritage, and is building bridges of constructive dialogue between various cultures to enhance Dubai's position as a global centre for culture, an incubator for creativity, and a thriving hub for talent.

The Authority is committed to preserving and celebrating Dubai's history and highlighting its contemporary cultural and creative fabric through practicing its role as a cultural and creative sector Regulator, Planner, Enabler and Operator through a series of mega cultural initiatives, events and projects, and the various cultural and heritage assets under its remit, including the management of 5 historical destinations, 4 museums, Al Jalila Cultural Centre for Children and 8 Dubai Public Libraries.

Dubai Culture is developing regulatory frameworks for Dubai's cultural and creative sectors based on the priorities of its strategic roadmap 2020 – 2026 and the enablers that seek to support talents and stimulate active participation from society members. The aim is to create an ecosystem that stimulates creative industries and reinforces Dubai's position as a global cultural destination, and its cultural responsibility of safeguarding Dubai's tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

The Authority's Strategic Roadmap


OUR VISION: Dubai: A global center for culture. A thriving hub for talent. An incubator for creativity
WE ARE:
GUARDIANS
EXPLORERS
CONNECTORS
ACHIEVERS
OUR MISSION:
To enable the next generation of talent to be inspired to connect and create
To make culture everywhere and for everyone
To enable culture and arts to positively contribute to the economy
To position Dubai on the Global cultural map
To ensure National heritage is preserved, celebrated, and globally recognized
SECTORAL PRIORITIES
TALENT & EDUCATION
1 Foster an ecosystem for young talent to thrive (in and outside the education system)
2 Attract & retain diverse global talent
ACCESSIBILITY & ENGAGEMENT
3 Integrate arts & creativity in the city's urban spaces
4 Strengthen and increase engagement of the diverse community
CREATIVE ECONOMY
5 Cultivate a nurturing business environment
GLOBAL FOOTPRINT
6 Boost Dubai's status as a cultural destination
7 Export Dubai's homegrown cultural offerings
CULTURAL RESPONSIBILITY
8 Safeguard intangible and tangible cultural heritage
INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES
HAPPINESS
Excellence in corporate culture and standard of services
1 Customer happiness
2 Employee happiness
OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE
Follow best practice in developing the institutional system
3 Organizational agility
4 Optimized spend & operational excellence
5 Revenue generation & growth
DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION
Perform according to digital government standards
6 Technology
7 Automation
8 Data & information
STRATEGIC ENABLERS
1 INNOVATION & FUTURE SHAPING
2 PARTNERSHIPS
3 GOVERNANCE
LITERATURE
ART & DESIGN
CULTURAL HERITAGE
AREAS

Dubai Culture's Strategic Pillars

- Encouraging and supporting the public and private sectors and non for profit organizations to contribute to the creation of various cultural events and activities to enrich the cultural content within the community.
- Confirm the cultural heritage values and activate them through school curricula.
- Encourage and support creative writers and artists, supporting their literary and artistic activities and works and nurturing young talents in the field of cultural, literary and artistic creativity.
- Preserve the emirate's folklore and folk arts.

Dubai Culture - Three Strategies in One Year

In 2021, the wise leadership approved three strategies relating to the cultural and creative sector. It was the first time that three strategies were approved in one year since te launch of Dubai Culture:

Dubai Creative Economy Strategy:

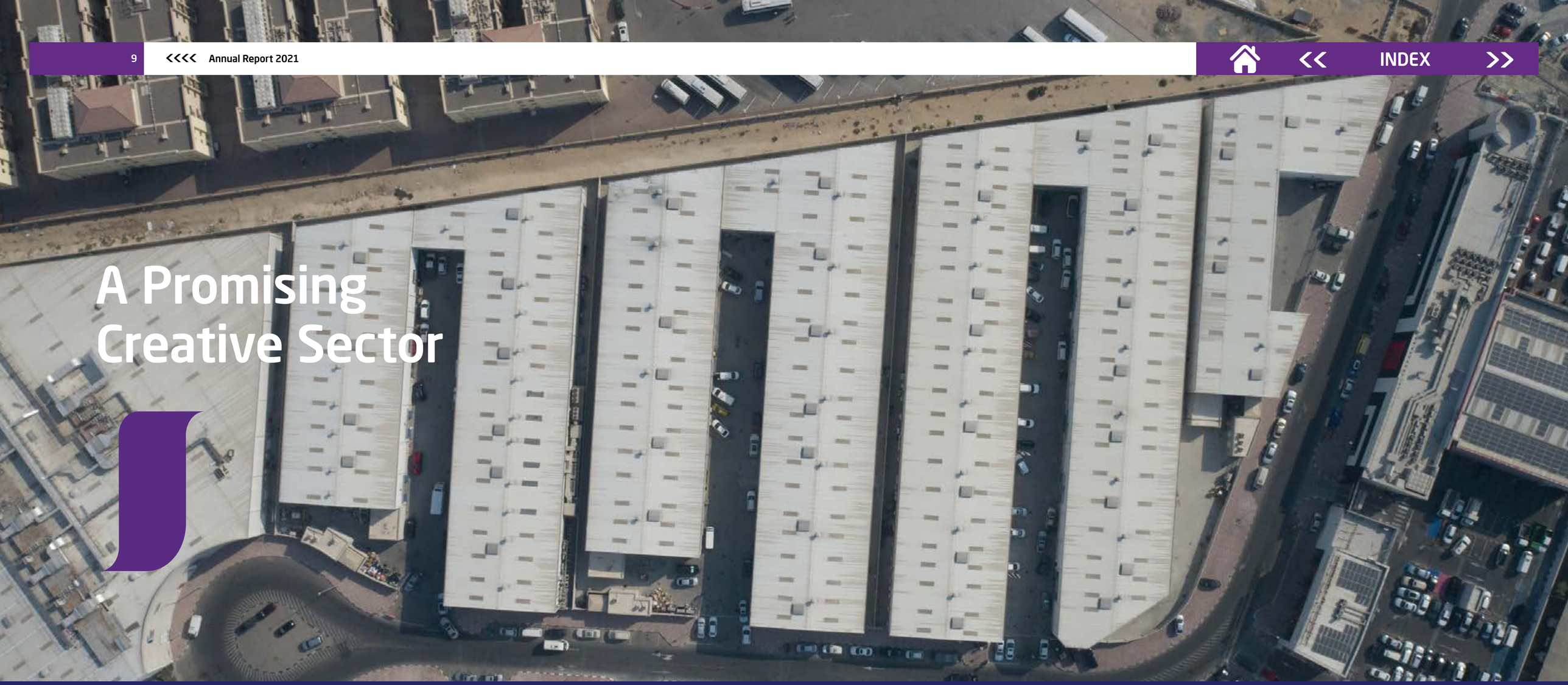
Aims to transform the emirate into a preferred destination for creatives and the global capital of the creative economy by 2025.

Rehabilitation and Revitalisation of Al Fahidi Historical Neighbourhood Strategy:

Aims to transform the neighbourhood into a leading cultural destination, offering creative artistic experiences amid an authentic architectural and urban fabric, raising artistic taste, and devoting the spirit of cultural innovation to fuel the creative movement, and support the growth of the creative economy.

Public Art Strategy:

Includes three pillars: economic growth by stimulating cultural tourism, developing cultural infrastructure by encouraging youth to contribute to improving technical infrastructure, and sustainable urban and community development.



A Promising Creative Sector

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum launched the Dubai Creative Economy Strategy to transform the emirate into a preferred destination for global talents, as well as the global capital of the creative economy by 2026, by increasing the number of creative and cultural companies to 15,000, with 140,000 jobs and a contribution target of 5% to the emirate's GDP.

His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of the Executive Council of Dubai, launched the Al Quoz Creative Zone project to establish an integrated creative zone that would meet the requirements of talents from all over the world and entrepreneurs wishing to invest in various areas of the creative economy.

Dubai Culture launched the Creatives' Journey to facilitate the practice of business for creative talents and provide an innovative and flexible environment that would contribute to supporting them in establishing their businesses in Dubai in less than seven minutes, in addition to offering them a set of incentives and benefits.

Cultural Assets

Dubai Culture revealed that its cultural assets have achieved a remarkable recovery from the consequences of the pandemic, with its museums, heritage and historical sites and public libraries having attracted over 521,000 visitors during 2021. Internal statistics showed that the same assets are still gaining momentum, which is an indication for continued growth in 2022.

Creative Strategic Projects

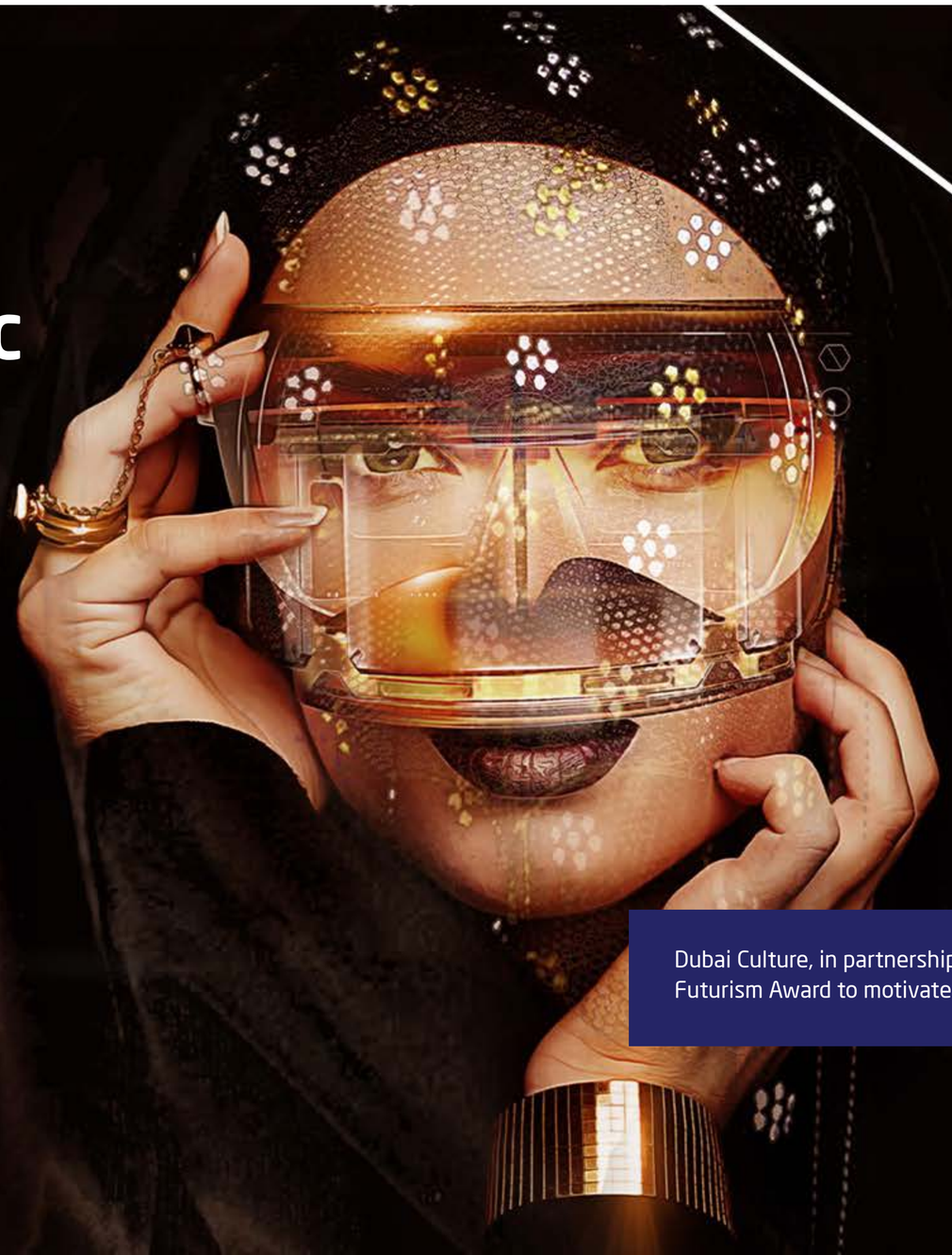
His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum launched the Al Fahidi Fort rehabilitation project, which is a joint effort between Dubai Culture, Dubai Municipality, and the Department of Economy and Tourism in Dubai and seeks to preserve the emirate's rich history and heritage as well as to situate the district as a vibrant cultural hub for visitors.

Creative Strategic Projects

The Authority also announced the launch of the first School of Life at Hatta Library, in cooperation with Dubai Holding, to support the creative community and present its entrepreneurs with the opportunity to translate their ideas and creativity into successful achievements and businesses. The cooperation between the two parties focuses on several pillars that fall within the scope of developing skills, talents and creative businesses in Hatta.

Dubai Culture launched the Faces of Hatta documentary project, which aims to record the oral history and cultural heritage of Hatta, drawing from the oral narratives of people who have witnessed its evolution to preserve and transmit it to future generations.

Creative Strategic Projects



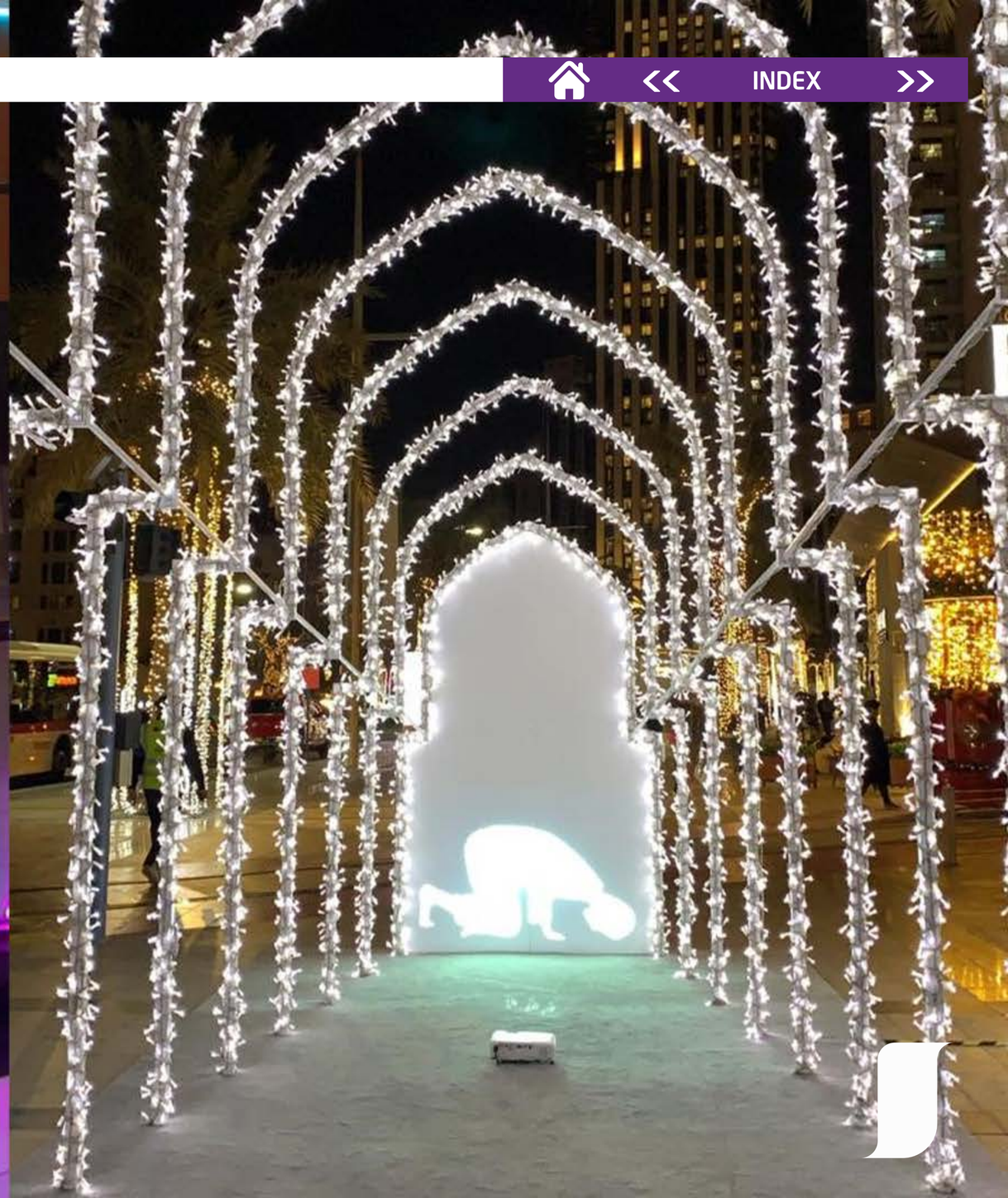
Dubai Culture, in partnership with the Dubai Future Foundation, launched the Emirati Futurism Award to motivate talents to present their visions for the future of the UAE.

Creative Strategic Projects

Dubai Culture launched a dialogue series titled Museum Dialogues throughout 2021 at Etihad Museum, celebrating the UAE's great achievements over the past 50 years and highlighting the most prominent milestones since the union on 2 December 1971.

Creative Strategic Projects

Through the Al Hay project that was launched in partnership between Dubai Culture, the Department of Economy and Tourism in Dubai and Emaar during the Dubai Shopping Festival, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Boulevard, opposite the Address Downtown Hotel, was illuminated with dazzling lights, taking Dubai residents and visitors on a journey of lights and discovery.

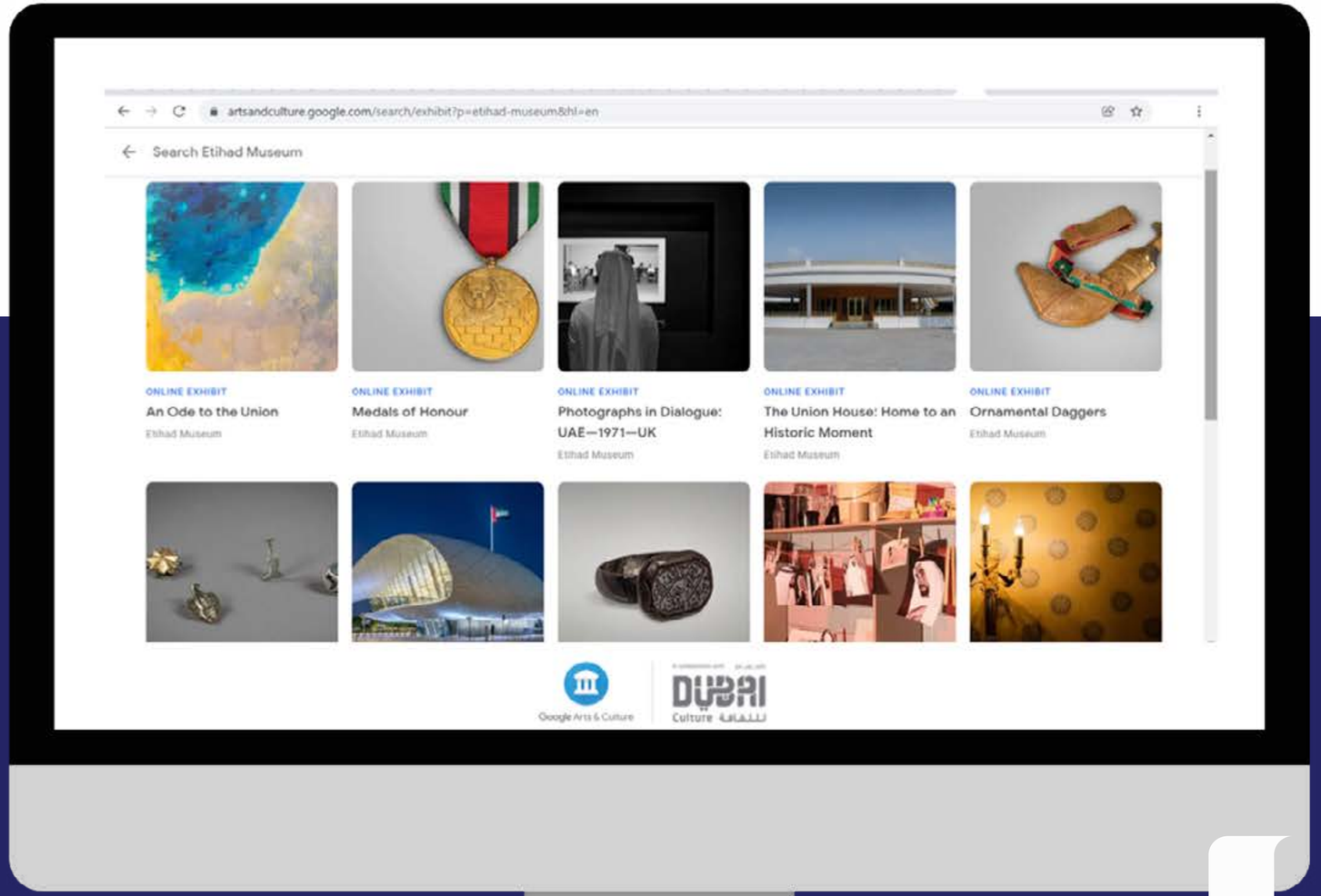


Creative Strategic Projects

As part of an important achievement, Dubai Collection initiative, through its steering and curatorial committees headed by Her Highness Sheikha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, selected 87 new artworks for its collection, including works by a number of the most prominent icons of modern art in the Arab world and by renowned UAE contemporary artists. Additionally, 19 artworks from the collection of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum that form part of ARM Holding's art collection were also selected.

Creative Strategic Projects

Dubai Culture launched the Dubai's Culture and Heritage project on Google Arts & Culture, comprising a cultural page through which global audiences can learn about Dubai's creative scene and the essence of its authentic cultural identity. The platform constitutes a new space to highlight the creativity of Dubai in the past and present, providing audiences around the world with a rich cultural content across more than 800 iconic high-resolution images, including 120 artefacts, and over 70 articles in Arabic and English that document the history and present of Dubai through the eyes of its people and residents.



Creative Strategic Projects

Dubai Culture launched the Dubai Framework for Cultural Statistics, which developed comprehensive classification of creative economy activities in the emirate, in accordance with international references and standards in this field. This constituted a new stop on the road to monitoring statistical data in the fields of cultural industries, empowering and developing this sector and highlighting its strength.

Creative Strategic Projects

The Authority opened the door for craftsmen, talents and entrepreneurs in Al Quoz to apply for the long-term cultural visa that was approved by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum in 2019 to empower and encourage them to settle in Dubai as well as to provide them with the opportunity to flourish and engage in the region's development process.

By the end of 2021, Dubai Culture awarded over 4,500 accreditation certificates to talents and artists of different nationalities.

Achievement and Leadership

As part of its commitment to playing an active role in achieving the objectives of the Dubai Paperless Strategy launched by His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum in February 2018, Dubai Culture has succeeded in achieving complete digital transformation in the internal and external operations and services it provides at its headquarters and at its Al Jalila Cultural Centre for Children, with each of them receiving a 100% paperless stamp, making it the only government entity to receive two stamps.

Dubai Culture won six awards, including four gold, a silver and a bronze at the Transform MENA Awards 2021 ceremony that was held in Dubai in May 2021. The Awards celebrate creative and strategic ideas in the development of corporate identities in the region and those who excel in building and re-launching them.

Dubai ranked first in the Middle East, and 14th on the "Global Power Cities Index 2021" issued by the Institute for Urban Strategies at Japan-based Mori Memorial Foundation, out-performing cities such as Copenhagen, Los Angeles, Beijing, Barcelona, Vienna, Zurich and Toronto.

The UAE won the bid to host and organise the 27th International Council of Museums General Conference 2025 in Dubai, in a new global achievement that confirms the country's leadership at all levels. The vote, which was held in the French capital, Paris, was decided in favour of the UAE bid file, surpassing those of Sweden and Russia, making Dubai the first Arab city to organise this prestigious international conference.

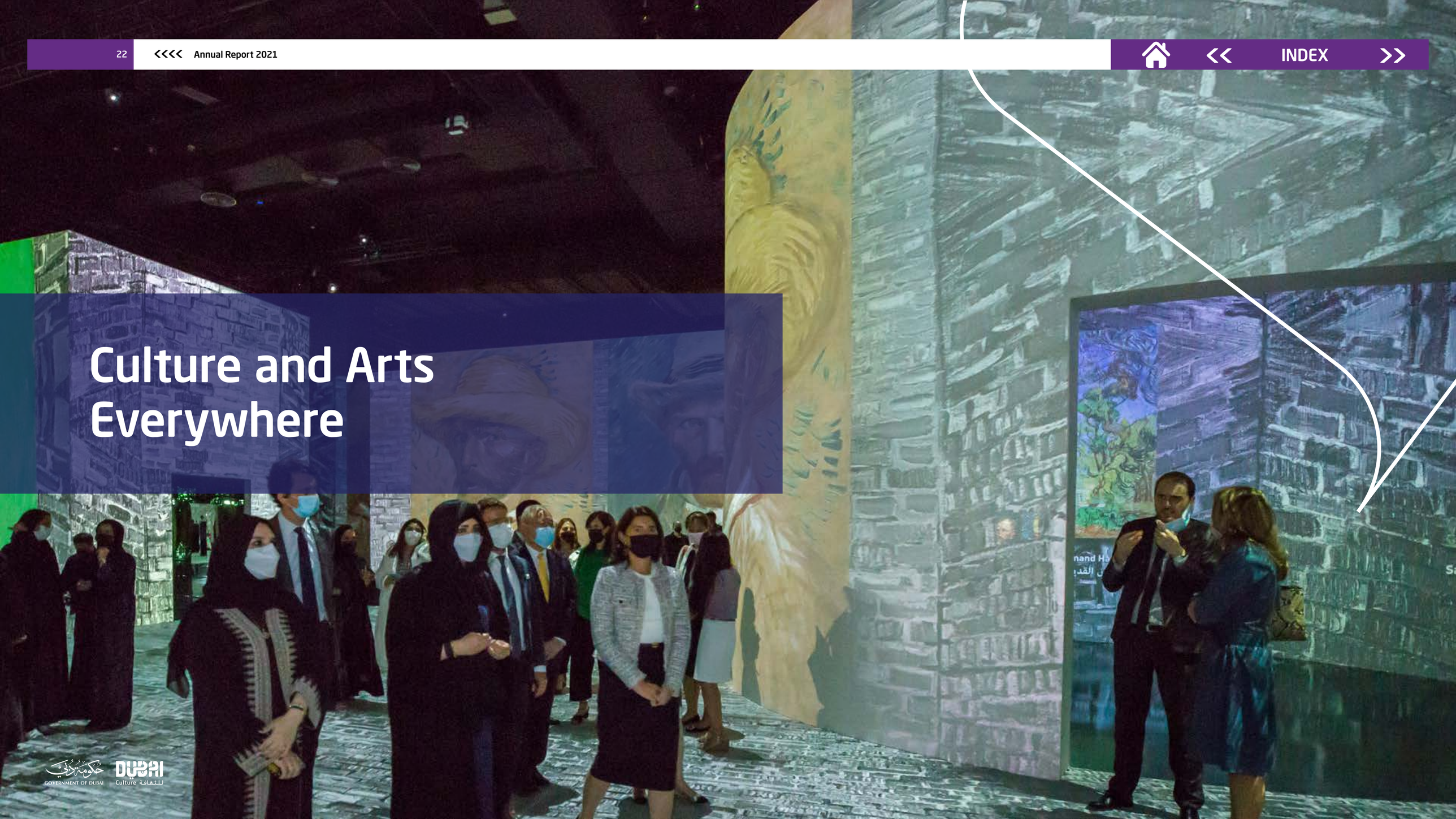
Expo 2020...Culture Leads the Scene

The Authority supported many projects that seek to make culture a leader in the scene at Expo 2020, with the aim of celebrating the UAE's rich culture with the world at large. Her Highness Sheikha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, accompanied by Hala Badri, Director General of the Authority, made several visits to the leading international exhibition, including stops at the UAE pavilion and the Italy pavilion, where Her Highness discussed with Dario Nardella, Mayor of Florence, means to enhance cultural and creative cooperation between Dubai and Florence, as well as reviewed programmes and projects that the two sides could cooperate to launch in order to enhance aspects of knowledge and cultural exchange between the two cities. Her Highness Sheikha Latifa also visited several other pavilions, such as Japan, China, and Bahrain, among others.

The Authority worked to ensure the readiness of its cultural assets to receive millions of visitors from Expo 2020 and provide unforgettable cultural experiences. Dubai Culture is committed to making culture accessible to everyone through the heritage and cultural assets that it manages in the emirate.

Dubai Culture partnered with Secret City Trails and the Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism to prepare exploratory experiences at Al Shindagha Museum in Dubai to introduce the world to the emirate's rich history and heritage via interactive experiences that enrich the knowledge of residents and visitors to Expo 2020 with Dubai's cultural treasures. Dubai Culture, in partnership with talabat Middle East, launched the #CreativeCravings initiative, through which a group of Emirati and UAE-based artists will present their own visions of the culinary scene at the talabat Kitchen throughout the duration of Expo 2020 Dubai.

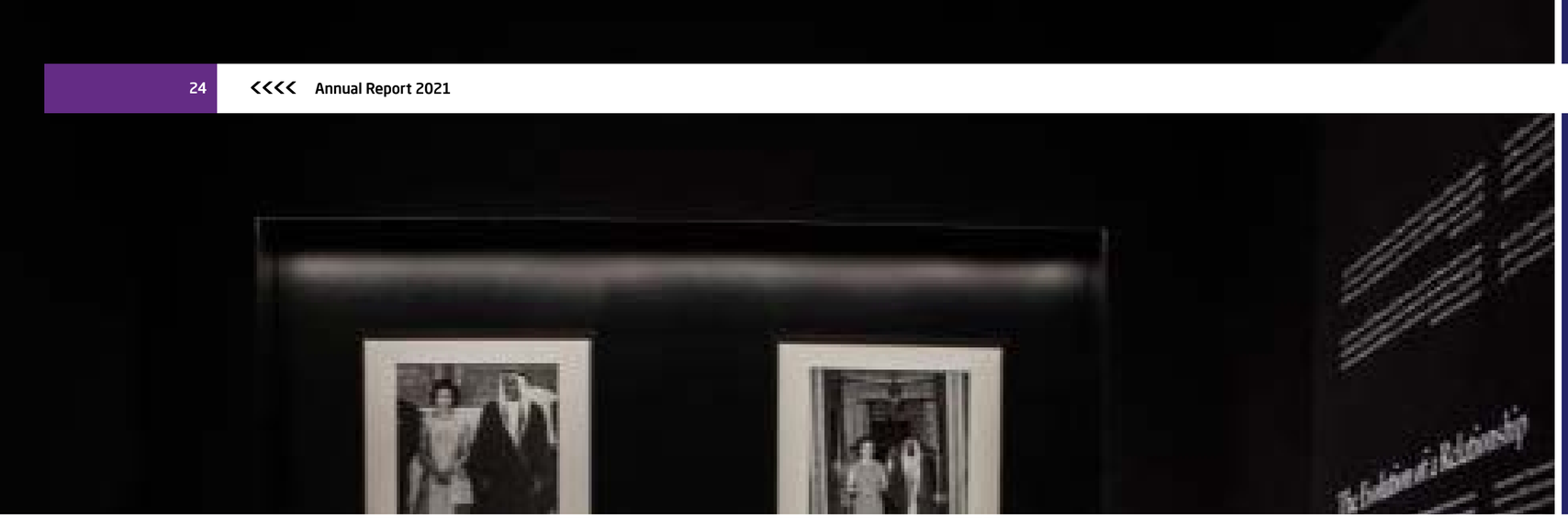
Culture and Arts Everywhere



Dubai Culture organised the 2021 edition of the Dubai Festival for Youth Theatre, witnessed the participation of national theatre groups from across the UAE, who presented six theatrical performances. The great Emirati actor, director and author, Mohammed Saeed Al Salti, was also celebrated and granted title of 'theatrical personality of the year.'

Dubai Culture organised a pottery exhibition by citizens and residents, in addition to a set of workshops to teach the basics of the pottery industry as part of World Art Dubai 2021.

In line with the festival's mission to support creative talents in the emirate, Dubai Culture cooperated with Akaas Visual Arts to organise an innovative art exhibition for theatrical photography titled 'After the Theatrical Performance' that accompanied the full festival.



The Authority made available the Photographs in Dialogue exhibition at Etihad Museum, through the Dubai 360 website, the largest interactive tour on the Internet to explore cities in the world.

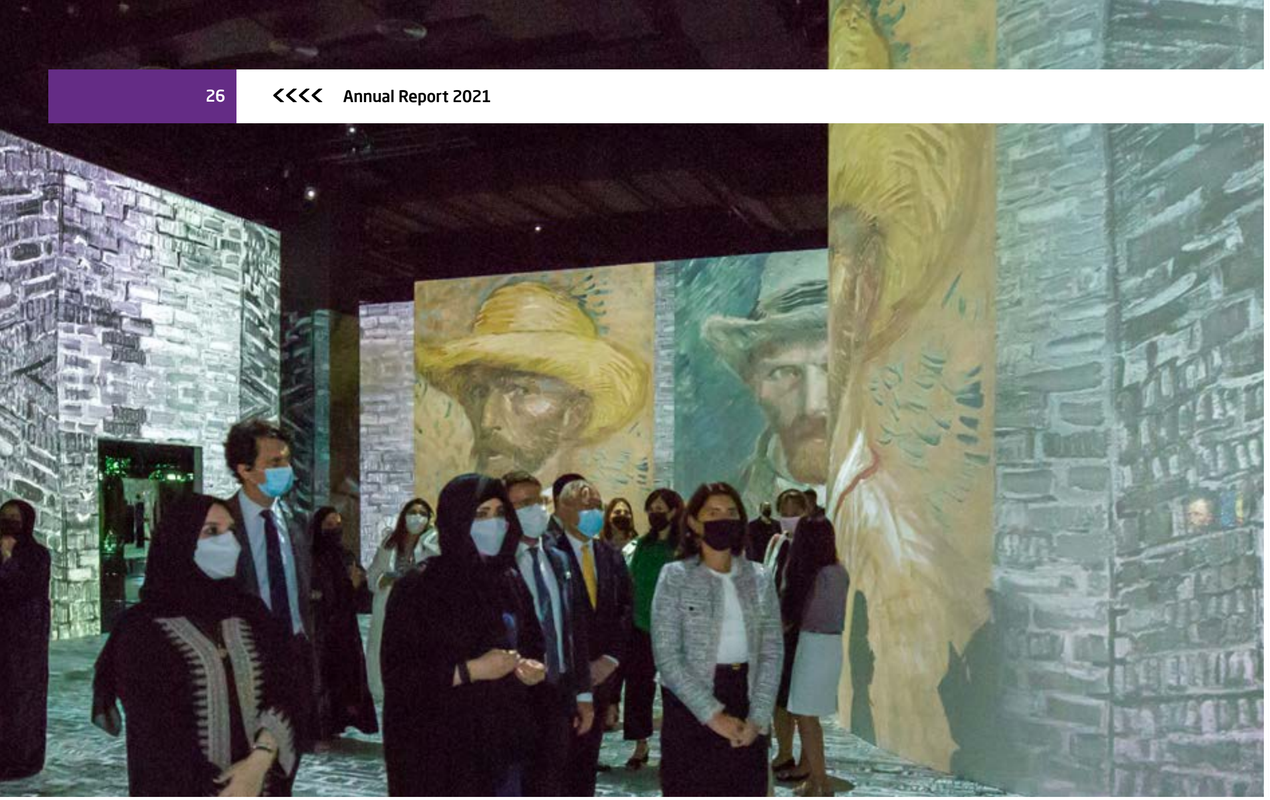
Dubai Culture supported the Dubai Design Week Marketplace initiative dedicated to creative entrepreneurs. The support included providing grants to a group of small companies working in the creative field.

Under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, and in a strategic partnership with Dubai Culture, Dubai Design Week once again celebrated the creative talents in the Middle East through its seventh edition, which was inaugurated by Her Highness on 8 November in a physical format for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic.

Under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, and with the support of Dubai Culture as a cultural partner for the event, Dubai Watch Week, one of the largest watch exhibitions in the region, also returned to celebrate time and creativity with the participation of over 45 leading brands from the most prominent names in the world of watchmaking.

Dubai Culture participated with Mall of the Emirates in organising The World of Banksy exhibition for the first time in the UAE. The exhibition provided a rich experience for art enthusiasts and connoisseurs of all ages, who are eager to explore the world of Banksy, one of most renowned graffiti artists.

Dubai Culture also launched the Arts in Public Transport initiative, in partnership with the Dubai Roads and Transport Authority to support the cultural sector and provide talents with the opportunity to put forward more initiatives and ideas that would highlight Dubai's position as a first-class cultural and creative hub regionally and globally. The artworks were distributed across Expo 2020, Dubai Mall, Jebel Ali, Dubai Investment Park, and Al Ghubaiba metro stations.



Her Highness Sheikha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum inaugurated Infinity Des Lumières, the region's largest digital arts centre, at Dubai Mall, putting forward a new era of digital art, with the participation of a group of creative and talented people.

Under the patronage of Her Highness, the Downtown Design exhibition was also launched as part of the week and with the support of Dubai Culture as a strategic partner for the event, showcasing the finest international designs on the waterfront terrace in Dubai Design District, celebrating the creative work of designers and brands from more than 20 countries around the world.

Partnerships to Support Talent and Boost the Cultural Economy

Dubai Culture signed a memorandum of understanding with Letswork, the innovative platform to provide practical solutions for co-working spaces in the emirate. The agreement aims to provide flexible workspaces for creatives within a network of the finest destinations within the city at affordable prices and exclusive benefits.

Dubai Culture continued its strategic partnership with Art Dubai, the leading international art fair in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia, held annually under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, towards supporting talent and enhancing the cultural scene in the emirate.

Her Highness Sheikha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum and Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem, Chairman and CEO of DP World, the premier global trade partner for Expo 2020 Dubai, signed a cooperation and partnership agreement to create new avenues for public-private partnerships in order to promote the cultural and creative economy of Dubai and the UAE.

GOVERNMENT OF DUBAI
DUBAI Culture للثقافة

Partnerships to Support Talent and Boost the Cultural Economy

Dubai Culture, in cooperation with the Knowledge and Human Development Authority, celebrated the launch of a new heritage book titled 'Hatta,' which documents Emirati heritage and life in the city of Hatta, by Emirati author and researcher Juma Khalifa bin Thalith.

The Authority, in partnership with Dubai Holding and Tashkeel, launched a creative artwork entitled For a better Tomorrow, celebrating the achievements witnessed by the UAE over the past 50 years, reflecting its future vision for the good of humanity, and embodying the harmony between the country's past, present and future.

Corporate Social Responsibility

The Authority partnered with young Emirati writer Dubai Abulhoul to donate copies of her children's story collection to Al Jalila Children's Specialty Hospital in order to promote cultural awareness among sick children and make them happy and support them during their treatment.

Dubai Culture continued its Ramadan Heroes journey, the initiative launched in Ramadan 2020 with the aim of honouring basic service employees in Dubai, by launching the second, expanded version of this campaign, whose scope of support included basic service employees and needy families throughout the UAE, in cooperation with its partners: talabat, Emirates Red Crescent Authority and UAE Food Bank. Ramadan Heroes succeeded in delivering Iftar meals and Ramadan boxes to 76,652 beneficiaries around the UAE, with a value exceeding AED 606,000.

Workshops to Hone Cultural and Artistic Talents

Dubai Culture has concluded the e-learning initiative it launched in cooperation with LinkedIn, the largest professional network around the world. It achieved remarkable success in terms of providing the knowledge and educational support that the creative sector needs to make the best transformation, continue activities and develop creative talents. The initiative attracted 2,000 Participants who benefited from 11,130 comprehensive training courses in various creative fields.

The Authority also organised a virtual session titled The Arts of Reading moderated by Emirati writer Waleed Al Marzooqi for middle and high school students at the Awqaf and Minors Affairs Foundation in Dubai, as part of The Youth Reading Club initiative launched by the Authority as part of its initiatives aimed at improving the services provided in its public libraries.

As part of the Dubai Performing Arts Programme Dubai Culture organised a variety of virtual workshops under the supervision of Lebanese actress and director Sarah Mezher, with the aim of developing the capabilities of the emerging generations in the field of making dolls and musical instruments from used materials and employing them artistically. This comes as part of the Authority's efforts to contribute to the development of a new generation of talents in the performing arts sector.

Within the framework of Dubai Culture's constant keenness to support creative talents in various literary fields by making its public libraries available to host specialised workshops, it hosted a number of educational workshops at Al Safa Art & Design Library as part of the 12th Sharjah Children's Reading Festival

Dubai Culture held its summer camp 2021 under the theme 'Our Summer is Culture and Creativity' throughout August, which included a wide range of innovative and purposeful activities that took them to the arts, life skills and fun spaces. The camp, which included 251 activities witnessed remarkable success, attracting over 3,000 students with a 97% satisfaction rate.

The Authority also organised its winter camp 2021 in its public libraries under the theme 'Inspiration Towards Creativity,' providing children and adolescents with a rich set of workshops that inspired them and unleashed their creativity during the winter holidays, inspired by the spirit of the country's celebrations of its fiftieth anniversary.

Dubai Culture, in cooperation with the Culture and Science Symposium in Dubai, celebrated the creations of the late Emirati artist and poet "Salem Al Jamri" with whom the Nabataean poem and folk song in the UAE were associated, via a new episode of the 'Honouring Their Memories' programme in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of his passing.

Through an innovative strategic partnership between Dubai Culture and Hala Ride, the joint project between RTA and Careem, and in conjunction with the launch of the #DubaiDestinations initiative, the first-of-its-kind 'Soul of Dubai - Cultural Experiences' project was launched with the aim of shedding light on the essence and landmarks of the rich Emirati culture in Dubai and highlighting its authentic traditions through the eyes of its residents.

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